

Fall 2018

# Introduction to International Relations

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*Seton Hall University*

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**Introduction to International Relations (DIPL 1711)**  
**School of Diplomacy and International Relations**  
**Seton Hall University (Fall 2018)**  
Location: Stafford Hall, Room 207  
Time: Thurs. 11am to 1:30pm

Instructor: Zainab Alam

Email: Zainab.Alam@shu.edu

Office: McQuaid Hall, Room 101-C

Office Hours: Thursdays, 4:30 – 6:30 P.M. (or by appointment)

**Course Description:**

This course provides students with the theory and historical background needed to understand contemporary international relations, including the causes, character, and consequences of conflict and cooperation in world politics. Some of issues we will cover include: What are the causes of war and peace? Is international cooperation attainable? Is globalization good or bad? Is the U.S. a declining great power? What are the most dangerous threats facing states today? As a course designed to meet the Critical Thinking Proficiency Guidelines, students will be expected to demonstrate and hone their analytical skills.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Provide students with the necessary theoretical tools to analyze questions in international relations from multiple perspectives.
- Enable students to compare and evaluate the explanatory power of competing theories.
- Assist students in gaining the historical background needed to understand contemporary international events.

**Critical Thinking:** Critical thinking is an integral component of this course as well as the wider study of international relations. To think critically is to think clearly about the subject matter under consideration and ask questions. Thinking critically involves evaluating evidence and considering possible alternative explanations. In addition to learning the historical material (e.g. important events, dates, names) covered in the readings and class, a major focus of this course is on developing the skills needed to understand and evaluate the theoretical arguments of the various authors whose works we read. Along with summarizing the key arguments of each work, students will be expected to critically dissect major theories of international politics in order to arrive at their own conclusions regarding the nature of the international system. To help foster these critical thinking skills, the course calendar section of the syllabus contains weekly reading prompts that students should consult when doing the readings. Students will be evaluated based on both their knowledge of and ability to critically evaluate the main arguments and theories of the course.

By the end of the semester, students should have acquired knowledge and understanding of key concepts, models, theories, and debates involved in the study of contemporary international relations and diplomacy, and the interaction between politics and economics in the international system. Students should also have developed the skills to analyze complex situations and synthesize information.

## II. Course Requirements

- **Required Texts:**
  - Karen A. Mingst and Ivan M. Arreguin-Toft (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.), *Essentials of International Relations* (KM).
  - John T. Rourke (16<sup>th</sup> Ed), *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in World Politics* (JR)
- **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate in class discussions. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. There are no unexcused absences. After two absences, your final grade will drop by half a letter for each absence.
- **Participation (15 points):** You are expected to read the required materials specified for each session prior to class - otherwise, following the lectures, understanding points of departure, taking good notes and contributing to class discussion would be very difficult, if not impossible. Class lectures are designed to be complementary to the required readings and will summarize, criticize, and analyze the reading materials. If you are noticeably absent from participating in class discussions, I will call on you and ask you to participate. There are also in-class assignments throughout the semester which count towards this grade.
- **Debates from *Taking Sides*- Critical Analyses (20 points):** Twice during the course of the semester, at any time *before we discuss that particular debate in class* you are required to submit one written analysis in MS Word format taking a critical perspective on the debates put forward in *Taking Sides*. Each of these two critical perspectives should be at least 750 words, and should not only summarize the issues in the debate, but complicate the ideas laid out in the textbook by taking into consideration current events and other perspectives.
- **Regional Groups and Group Presentations (15 points):** At the beginning of the semester, each student will be placed in a regional group (Including: Africa, East Asia, Europe, MENA, Oceania, South and Central America, South and Central Asia) consisting of no more than 5 students. Throughout the semester, you will get together as a group to discuss current politics-related events within different countries from your region. Each student from each group will be asked to pick one country (or in some cases sub-region) that they will focus on for group discussions throughout the semester. Towards the end of the semester, your

group will be expected to make a **15-minute presentation**, in which you provide an overview of your assigned region, and present on an assigned current foreign policy issue affecting one or more of the countries in your region. Additional details will be posted on Blackboard as the semester progresses.

- **Exams (50 points):** There will be a midterm worth 25 points (October 18) and a final exam worth 25 points (50 points in total). Except in serious cases of emergency, no make-up exam will be granted (see below).
- **Absences and Late Work:** Absences from either the midterm or final will result in a **zero** point for that examination unless you have a *written, legitimate excuse* (doctors note etc. for that absence) explaining the reasons for your absence on that particular day. If you have a last-minute emergency it is your responsibility to let me know and properly document your emergency as soon as possible (preferably within 24 hours). In case of approved emergency, a makeup exam will be administered at a time suitable to the student and instructor, and will most likely differ from the first exam. Late papers will also not be accepted, except in cases of legitimate emergency. Should the instructor decide to accept such lateness, points will be deducted corresponding to the number of days the assignment is handed in after the due-date.
- **Assignments Weighting and Grading:** There are a total of 100 possible points for this course. The relative weight of each assignment is as follows:

Participation	15 points
Debate Analysis	20 points
Regional Groupwork and Presentations	15 points
Midterm exam	25 points
Final exam	25 points

#### **Grading Scale**

A 93-100, A- 90-92, B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82, C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70-72, D 63-66, D- 60-62, D+ 67-69, F 59 and below

### **III. Submissions, Electronic Devices and Other Communications**

- Papers should utilize one of the *Chicago Manual of Style* citation formats: Author-Date or Notes and Bibliography. The guidelines for these formats are on the course Blackboard page.
- The use of cell phones is prohibited in the classroom. Cellular devices need to be turned off or on silent and out-of-sight. Laptops and tablets can also be immensely distracting, and it is expected that they will be used for class-related purposes only. If you are caught on your phone, or on social media or doing non-class related activities on these other

devices, it will count negatively towards your participation grade.

- Email is the best way of communicating with me. When emailing, be sure to be professional and make sure you let me know what class you are in. I will respond in a timely manner.

#### **IV. Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the administration, and may result in a lowered or failing grade for the course and up to possible dismissal from the School of Diplomacy. See University and School standards for academic conduct here:

<<http://www13.shu.edu/offices/student-life/community-standards/upload/Seton-Hall-University-Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>>

<<http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm>>

It is the policy and practice of Seton Hall University to promote inclusive learning environments. If you have a documented disability you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in compliance with University policy, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and/or the New Jersey Law against Discrimination. Please note, students are not permitted to negotiate accommodations directly with professors. To request accommodations or assistance, please self-identify with the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS), Duffy Hall, Room 67 at the beginning of the semester. For more information or to register for services, contact DSS at [\(973\) 313-6003](tel:9733136003) or by e-mail at [DSS@shu.edu](mailto:DSS@shu.edu).

##### Policy on Incompletes:

Incompletes will be given only in exceptional cases for emergencies. Students wishing to request a grade of Incomplete must provide documentation to support the request accompanied by a Course Adjustment Form (available from the Diplomacy Main Office) to the professor *before* the date of the final examination. If the incomplete request is approved, the professor reserves the right to specify the new submission date for all missing coursework. Students who fail to submit the missing course work within this time period will receive a failing grade for all missing coursework and a final grade based on all coursework assigned. Any Incomplete not resolved within one calendar year of receiving the Incomplete or by the time of graduation (whichever comes first) automatically becomes an "FI" (which is equivalent to an F). It is the responsibility of the student to make sure they have completed all course requirements within the timeframe allotted. Please be aware that Incompletes on your transcript will impact financial aid and academic standing.

#### **V. Disabilities**

Students requesting classroom accommodation for disabilities must have their disability on file with the appropriate office at Seton Hall University before they can be accommodated. Please let me know at the earliest should you need any prescribed attention.

## VI. Class Calendar and Reading Schedule\*

### Week 1: August 30

Subject: Introduction

Readings: KM Ch. 1

### Week 2: September 6

Subject: Approaches to IR and Historical Context

*Sign up for countries, country presentations and debates*

Readings: KM, Ch. 1&2; Robin Wood's "Critical Thinking"

### Week 3: September 13

Subject: Historical Background continued, Theories of IR

Readings: KM, Ch. 3

### Week 4: September 20

Subject: The International System

Reading: KM, Ch. 4; JR Unit 1, Issue 3

*Debate 1: Issue 3. Is China Becoming a Dangerous Superpower?*

### Week 5: September 27

Subject: The State

Readings: KM, Ch. 5; Unit 1, Issue 2

*Debate 2: Should Russia Be Considered a Hostile Country?*

### Week 6: October 4

Subject: International Organizations—IGOs and NGOs

Readings: KM, Ch. 7; JR Issue 8

*Debate 3: Issue 14. Is the UN a Worthwhile Organization?*

### Week 7: October 11 (No Class, Fall Break)

### Week 8: October 18

**Midterm exam, Chapters 1-5**

### Week 9: October 25

Subject: International Law

Reading: KM, Ch. 7; JR, Issue 15

*Debate 4: Issue 15. Is U.S. Refusal to Join the International Criminal Court Wise?*

### Week 10: November 1 (Class ends at 12, All Saints Day Mass)

Subject: War and Strife

Reading: KM, Ch. 8; JR, Issue 13

*Debate 5: Issue 13. Is the Use and Threat of Force Necessary in International Relations?*

Week 11: November 8

Subject: International Political Economy

Reading: KM, Ch. 9; JR Issue 8

Recommended Film: Life and Debt

*Debate 6: Issue 8. Is Economic Globalization Good for Both Rich and Poor?*

Week 12: November 15

Subject: Transnational Issues: Human Rights and the Individual

Readings: KM, Chs. 6 & 10, JR Issue 16

*Debate 7: Issue 16. Should the United States Ratify the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women?*

Week 13: November 22 (No class, Thanksgiving)

Week 14: November 29

Subject: Transnational Issues: (Environment, World Health & Crime)

Reading: KM, Ch. 11; JR Unit 5, Issue 18:

Week 15: December 6 (Last day of class)

Subject: Wrap up and Group presentations

**Final Exam: TBA**

\*Changes may be made to the class reading schedule as the semester progresses.